

September 1, 2020

The Honorable Mark Meadows
Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington D.C., 20500

Bill Stepien
Campaign Manager
Donald J. Trump For President, Inc.
725 Fifth Ave, New York, NY, 10022

Dear Messrs. Meadows and Stepien:

We write with deep concern about actions of President Trump, senior Trump Administration officials, and the Trump campaign which we fear could endanger the lives of people we serve and represent.

As you know, the country remains mired in a deadly pandemic that has killed over 184,000 Americans. Earlier this year, the nation's capital was the site of one of the worst hotspots in the nation, and the effects were keenly felt in our Arlington, Virginia community. To date, over 3,500 Arlingtonians have tested positive for COVID-19, over 460 have been hospitalized, and 140 have died.¹ But in recent months our community has turned the tide against this outbreak with lockdowns, stringent public safety measures, and the sacrifices of ordinary people. Arlington has a great deal to lose if we were to be afflicted with a new wave of widespread infection.

We are therefore terribly distressed to see President Trump and those around him paying insufficient attention to public safety guidelines and legal orders meant to stop the spread of the disease when they are here in our community.

Earlier this summer, Vice President Pence shared and then deleted a photograph which showed him addressing a packed room of unmasked staff at the Trump Campaign's Arlington, Virginia headquarters.² Subsequent news reports sourced to campaign staff revealed that Virginia public health guidance and safety rules requiring social distancing and face coverings in indoor settings are often ignored there.³ On Friday, August 21, President Trump addressed a national conference of conservative activists at a hotel in Pentagon City, and photographs of the event showed that it

¹ Virginia Department of Health statistics

² Paul LeBlanc, "*Pence deletes tweet showing Trump campaign staff not wearing face masks or social distancing*," CNN, June 11, 2020 <https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/10/politics/mike-pence-2020-election-coronavirus/index.html>

³ Dan Diamond, "*'You get made fun of': Trump campaign office shuns masks, social distancing*," Politico, July 10, 2020 <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/10/trump-campaign-office-social-distancing-356439>

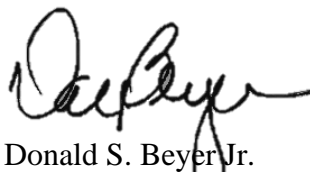
violated State guidelines, and few attendees employed the required physical distancing or wore face coverings.⁴⁵⁶

The President and staff who work with him travel frequently across the country and are regularly exposed to large crowds. Some of them have already been infected with coronavirus.⁷ The conference in Arlington, likewise, was of the type that draws attendees who travel across the country. Some gatherings of this type, known as “super-spreader events,” fueled early outbreaks of COVID-19 and helped cause the national crisis which has claimed so many lives.⁸

Those participating in these activities and events here without wearing masks or engaging in physical distancing could easily put Arlington at risk of a new outbreak. We are sure you agree that, as leaders and public servants, it is important that all of us set the best possible example in a time of crisis. That includes modelling the best behavior, as exemplified in safety guidelines developed by scientists and medical experts at the Centers for Disease Control and the Virginia Department of Health, and following the Executive Order enacted by Governor Northam.⁹¹⁰

It is deeply important to us that everyone when they are in Arlington, including the President and personnel affiliated with him, adhere to public health guidelines requiring physical distancing and face coverings in indoor settings. We beseech you to prioritize the health of the people around you, including your own staff and, especially, the residents of Arlington whom we represent. The future health of our community may depend on it.

Sincerely,



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Libby Garvey, Chair
Arlington County Board of Supervisors

⁴ ABC's Elizabeth Thomas, on Twitter: https://twitter.com/lizzkatherine_/status/1296838017651482624

⁵ NPR's Ayesha Rascoe, on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ayesharascoe/status/1296836684273901569>

⁶ Reuters' Jeff Mason, on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/jeffmason1/status/1296835448183181315>

⁷ Alex Isenstadt, “Kimberly Guilfoyle under fire for Trump fundraising disarray,” Politico, July 23, 2020, <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/23/kimberly-guilfoyle-trump-fundraising-380380>

⁸ Sarah Kaplan and Chris Mooney, “Genetic data show how a single superspreading event sent coronavirus across Massachusetts — and the nation,” Washington Post, August 25, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2020/08/25/boston-coronavirus-superspreading-event/>

⁹ Centers for Disease Control, *Why It Is Important To Wear A Mask*, updated August 6, 2020 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

¹⁰ Governor Northam, *Executive Order 63*, May 26, 2020 <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-63-and-Order-Of-Public-Health-Emergency-Five---Requirement-To-Wear-Face-Covering-While-Inside-Buildings.pdf>